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Joseph P. Nolan  
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**Proposed HB 5070: AN ACT CONCERNING PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR SURVIVING PARENTS OF A SERVICEMAN OR VETERAN.**

My name is Joseph P. Nolan. I live in Waterbury, Connecticut. On November 18, 2004, my son, Sgt. Joseph M. Nolan, U.S. Army, was mortally wounded while on patrol near Fallujah, Iraq. Joe was fluent in the Arabic language and served with the 312<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division. He died several hours later at a military hospital in Baghdad.

You should also know that I served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1967 to 1969 including thirteen months overseas which included ten months in Vietnam.

Last year I was informed by another Gold Star parent that there is a property tax exemption law in Connecticut for Gold Star parents. When I called the tax collector's office in Waterbury to inquire about the Gold Star exemption, I was told that since I am a veteran, I already have a property tax exemption and one cannot have two property tax exemptions. I spoke with Congressman Chris Murphy from the 5<sup>th</sup> District as well as State Representatives Berger and Noujaim about having the existing Gold Star tax exemption law changed. Representative Berger and the entire Waterbury delegation agreed and proposed House Bill # 5070: An Act Concerning Property Tax Exemptions For Surviving Parents Of A Serviceman Or Veteran.

The proposed bill simply states that all Connecticut Gold Star parents be eligible for the Gold Star property tax exemption regardless of other exemptions or circumstances.

In my own case, the death of my son in Iraq and the fact that I am a military veteran are two

different sets of circumstances. One should not cancel the other one out. Also, the amount of actual dollars that we are talking about in tax exemptions is almost negligible. The Gold Star Parent property tax exemption law is simply another way to remember and honor our beloved fallen heroes and their families.

While Connecticut residents in general and the state government in particular are experiencing a severe economic crisis now, Gold Star parents have suffered a loss that will never end. The Gold Star Parent property tax exemption law should be changed so that all Gold Star parents living in Connecticut may be eligible for the property tax exemption should they choose to participate.

Before I leave, today, I would like to remind the Select Veterans' Committee of another bill that was proposed, i.e. # 5069: A Proposal To Close All Public Schools in Connecticut on Veterans' Day. Although that proposal is not on the docket today, I think it is a bill worth considering. There are only two days in the calendar year that specifically remember and honor living veterans and the fallen. Dismissing Veterans' Day as just another school day is a travesty to those who have served and those like my son, Joe, who have fallen in combat.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

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